VISIT BEAUFORT, PORT ROYAL & SEA ISLANDS



The Greater Beaufort-Port Royal Convention & Visitors Bureau

BEAUFORTSC.ORG

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

**03** Our mission

**04** LETTER FROM THE CVB

**05**PANDEMIC RESPONSE & RECOVERY

**07** MINDFUL MARKETING

11 MARKETING, SALES, & SPORTS

18
INDUSTRY & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

21 Staff & Board Directory

# OUR MISSION

The official destination marketing and management organization enhancing Northern Beaufort County's economy by positioning the area as a preferred visitor destination.

# OUR VISION

Collaborative partnerships designed for mutual benefit.
Leaders of visitor destination development and marketing in Northern Beaufort County.

# OUR STRATEGY

Promote and position the area as a preferred destination for leisure and meeting travel.

# A Year Like Any Other

A Message From Leadership

This past year redefined our industry and left a lasting mark on our destination. As we reflect on the lessons of the pandemic, we are encouraged by the recovery that has ensued (which, in fact, commenced the minute the shut down was announced!).

While we know that it will take time to fully rebuild, we are seeing signs of RENEWAL every day.

So many bright spots are emerging! Visitors are returning and the CVB continues to collaborate with our partners to create experiences that showcase our hospitality and meet the needs of eager visitors. Live festivals and events are back. Our attractions and tours are seeing pre-pandemic booking levels, and overnight accommodations are steadily improving their rates and occupancies.

The road to recovery travels right through our industry. Our organization continues to play a pivotal role in restoring the economic engine that fuels our communities. In the months ahead, we remain laser-focused on welcoming visitors back to Beaufort, Port Royal, and the Sea Islands. That focus delivers jobs, revenue, and a sustainable future for our friends, family, and neighbors – critically important work, indeed.

VISIT

BEAUFORT

PORT ROYAL SEA ISLANDS

701 CRAVEN STREET | BEAUFORT, SC 29902

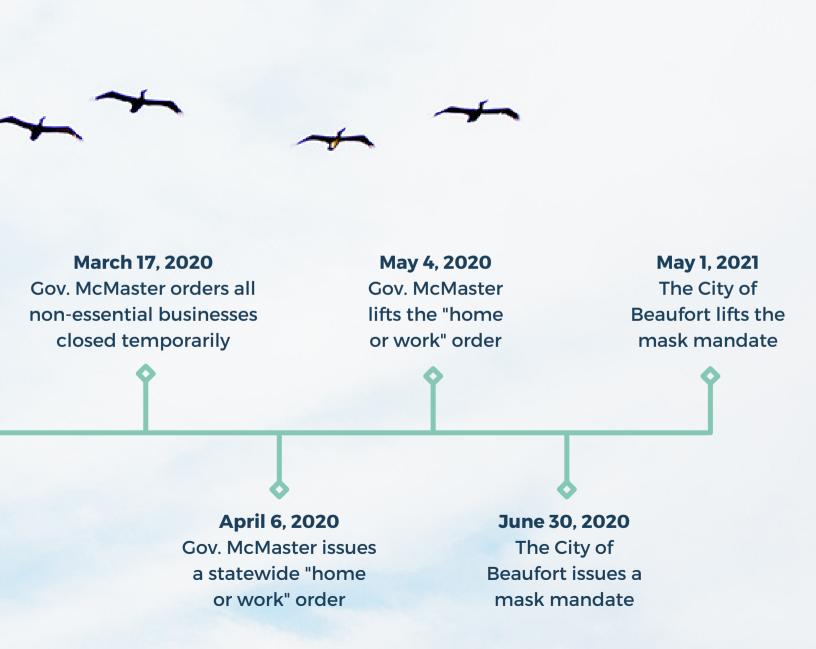
BEAUFORTSC.ORG

# PANDEMIC RESPONSE & RECOVERY

#### **CHALLENGES**

Tourism in Northern Beaufort County has endured its fair share of highs and lows, but none more disruptive than COVID-19. In this past year, it has taken a unified response from our community to rebuild our area's tourism economy.







## **NAVIGATING COVID-19**

As other destinations are just now working to navigate their best way forward, Beaufort was fortunate enough to become one of the top destinations at the start of the pandemic. We were able to leverage the area's spacious coastlines and various outdoor activities as a safe place for people to travel at the time or in the near future



Video 1: The Spirit of Travel April 30, 2020

**During National Travel & Tourism** Week 2020, we emphasized that Beaufort will always be here whenever people are ready to travel.



4.1K Views



118 Engagements



Video 2: The SAFE Commitment August 21, 2020

Working with the Beaufort Area Hospitality Association, we created a video showing business owners taking the Safe Commitment Pledge to keep their businesses clean and safe for residents and visitors.





2.5K Views 182 Engagements

Our main objective was to keep Northern Beaufort County in front of potential travelers. Creating multiple videos for our "Dream Now, Discover Later" campaign, people continuously saw everything our area had (and still has) to offer them; a safe and spacious environment.

## **NAVIGATING COVID-19**



Video 3: Blue Skies Ahead September 15, 2020

Throughout the last year, our team created multiple videos, showing the beauty of our city and what it has to offer travelers.

\*Note: This is 1 of 40 videos/livestreams.





134 Engagements



Video 4: Plan Your Vacation Day January 26, 2021

With people starting to feel more comfortable with traveling, this video gives a push to get people to book their vacations now.





55 Engagements



Video 5: The Power of Travel May 3, 2021

After a year of dealing with the pandemic and lack of tourism, this video shows that Beaufort is open for business, and with the help of travelers, we can save our small businesses.

1.2K Views



65 Engagements

#### PAID RECOVERY ADVERTISING



# Digital/Paid Search May 2020 - June 2020

From March 2020 to May 2020, Visit Beaufort, Port Royal & Sea Islands suspended all paid marketing activity in response to the pandemic. This allowed us to roll over advertising money and shift our goals to the recovery effort. At the end of May 2020, we started the recovery campaign and flooded potential travelers with digital ads through social, SEO, Youtube, and CTV.











# *Trip Advisor*June 2020 - August 2020

As digital ads were running, "Phase 2" required placing more digital ads in Trip Advisor, the world's largest travel platform. As people looked into booking their next vacation, Beaufort needed to be in the public eye.







\*Beaufort's CTR was 3x higher than Trip Advisor's benchmark of .08%.



## 2020 | 2021 MARKETING REPORT





435,994

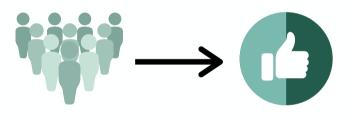
301,855

## **Top Site Pages**

- 1. Homepage
- 2. 50 Things To Do
- 3. Lodging



Social Media
Facebook Analytics



**Reach** 1,825,548

Engagement 197,520

#### **Total Followers**



129,049



37,400



3,629



# Public Relations









## 2020 | 2021 MARKETING REPORT



# Monthly Email Newsletter







\*Visit Beaufort's
Email Newsletter
campaign started last
year to re-engage our
cold audience.



# Paid Advertising Digital & Print | 16+ Million Ads Served

**Impressions** 

17+ Million

**Clicks** 

129K+

11,920

**Goals Conversions** 

196K+

**Leads Accquired** 

\$5

**Lodging Referrals** 

18K+

**Cost Per Conversion** 

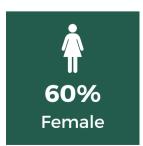


# The Inner Coastal Podcast 31 Episodes | 3.8K+ Listens | Award-Winning\*











<sup>\*</sup>Gold for Branded Series & Distinction. Silver for Individual Episodes.

# 2020 | 2021 WEBSITE HIGHLIGHTS

# **USERS BY GENDER**







Male

# **USERS BY DEVICE**







33%



6%

Mobile Desktop **Tablet** 





- 1. Homepage
- 2. 50 Things To Do
- 3. Lodging
- 4. Gullah History
- 5. Guides
- 6. Specials



- 1. Beaufort, SC
- 2. Things To Do in **Beaufort**
- 3. Beaufort
- 4. Harbor Island
- 5. Gullah Culture

**AGE OF USERS** YoY\*

102% 44% 25% 11% 2% -2% 35-44 45-54 25-34 18-24 55-64 64+

\*2020/2021 numbers compared to the previous year of 2019/2020

# 2020 | 2021 NEWS COVERAGE OF NOTE

- New York Times "Searching Out the Hidden Stories of South Carolina's Gullah Country"
- Southern Living "Wild and Windswept Wild: The Ultimate Guide to the Sea Islands
- Travel+Leisure "The 50 Best Places to Travel in 2021"
- AAA "Whatever Floats Your Boat: Top Dock Spots from North Carolina to Florida"
- Essence "Explore Gullah Culture In Beaufort's South Carolina's Low Country"
- Atlanta Magazine "Discover treasures—cultural, culinary, and historic—along Bay Street in Beaufort, South Carolina"
- The Epoch Times "Coastal Beauty: Beaufort, SC, Offers History, Architecture, Nature"



# PR OBJECTIVES

- Generate positive publicity about Beaufort and ensure the town is top of mind for the media.
- Increase awareness for Beaufort through a strategic PR plan rooted in a comprehensive media relations campaign.
- Focus on developing compelling pitches and press releases, securing target media visits, and mining media leads.



The historic Anchorage 1770 inn on Bay Street. (Courtesy o Beaufort)

TRAVEL

Coastal Beauty: Beaufort, SC, Offers History, Architecture Nature

# 2020 | 2021 SALES REPORT



**Request for Proposals** 



10 Sent



18,830 Potential Nights

Site Visits

5

FAM Tours\*

10 \*PR & Sales

\$1.7 Million Revenue







# SALES OBJECTIVES

- Meet or exceed room night goals for new business
- Prospect to book new & repeat business for local venues
- Explore target market contacts
- Attend ten trade shows to generate more qualified contacts than the previous year



171 CVB Leads



821 Nights Booked



\$74K Revenue

## SPORTS COUNCIL

The Beaufort Area Sports Council was established to develop sports-related events that impact our community. By working with local, regional, and national organizations the Sports Council supports a wide range of events that offer a diverse opportunity to athletes of all ages and all sports. The mission is to enrich the quality of life and economic well-being of Northern Beaufort County by supporting existing events and attracting new sporting events and activities.



#### 2021 SPORTS GROUPS IN BEAUFORT

- IFA Redfish & Kayak Tour: August 21-23, 2020 | Dowtown Beaufort (82 teams)
- Colonial Athletic Association Men's Golf Championship: April 25–27, 2021 | Dataw Island (8 teams/40 golfers)
- SCPRT PGA Tour: June 10–13, 2021 | Palmetto Championship at Congaree
- 15th Annual Beaufort River Swim + 5K/8K Run: June 11–12, 2021 (200–235 participants)
- SCAP Softball Tournament: June 24–25, 2021 | Beaufort Parks & Rec.
- Dixie Junior Boys Tournament: July 9–14, 2021 | Beaufort Parks & Rec.
- USA Powerlifting SC Palmetto Classic: July 23–25, 2021 (85 powerlifters)
- USATF National Championship: December 5, 2021



## THE BEAUFORT VISITORS CENTER

The Beaufort Visitors Center continues to exceed expectations this year even with the challenges faced by travelers who are concerned about Covid-19. Our friendly and knowledgeable staff welcomed 19,820 guests and helped further enrich their Beaufort experience by booking tickets for tours and attractions. The Visitor Center sold 4,359 tour tickets with a net sales of \$62K, and 3,692 items with a net sales of \$23K. A number of the items in the Visitors Center are made by local artisans and businesses.

We look forward to a busier year with more travelers coming to Beaufort, Port Royal, and the Sea Islands.











## **COLLABERATIONS**

Visit Beaufort, Port Royal, & Sea Islands strive to work with all organizations of Northern Beaufort County to help regenerate (post-COVID) and enhance our area as a whole. Collaboration within cities has shown to boost morale, lead to higher retention rates, help with problem-solving, and open up new channels for communication.

We have worked alongside the Beaufort Area Hospitality Association, the City of Beaufort, the Downtown Merchants Association, Cultural District Advisory Board, Historic Beaufort Foundation, Activate Beaufort Committee, and the Beaufort Regional Chamber of Commerce to open up communication and keep people engaged with what is going on in our area by helping to provide multiple marketing tactics for various events throughout this past year.

#### **Past Events:**

- Beaufort Shrimp Festival
- Tides to Tables Beaufort Oyster Festival
- Cupid Sip N' Stroll

#### **Monthly Events:**

- First Friday
- Third Thursday Live After Five

#### **Future Events:**

- The Annual Beaufort Water Festival
- The Watermelon Crawl
- Historical Sip N' Stroll (name TBD)



A weekly newsletter is sent out to all stakeholders and leaders to let them know about any updates throughout our region. This past year, 57 emails have been sent with an open rate of 38%, a click rate of 6%, and a click-through rate of 17%.

# Staff & Board Directory

\*The Beaufort CVB is governed by a board of directors that represents a cross-section of business and hospitality industry partners. Board Meetings are held bi-monthly.

#### **Beaufort CVB Staff**

#### **Robb Wells**

Presidents/CEO robbw@beaufortsc.org

#### Lynda Dyer

Director of Finance & Administration lynda@beaufortsc.org

#### Linda Jeffries

Director of Sales ljeffries@beaufortsc.org

#### **Colleen Smith**

Visitor Services Manager colleen@beaufortsc.og

#### Megan Carew

Marketing Coordinator megan@beaufortsc.org

#### **Daquan Mickens**

Communications Coordinator dmickens@beaufortsc.org

#### Wes Kitashima

Director of Sports Council sports@beaufortsc.org

## **Board of Directors**

Frank Lesesne Chair

**Hina Patel** 

Vice-Chair

**Christian Kata** 

Treasurer

Chris Johnson

Alissa Murrie

Linda Roper

Lisa Kussuba

**Chris Butler** 

**Todd McDaniel** 

**Dick Stewart** 

Greta Maddox

**Eileen Newton** 

Ron Tucker

# **Beaufort Experts**

Trudy Stevens
Tammy Stacks
Jannie Allen
Jenny Townsend
Christine Langan
Leigh Aiken
Suzanne Brown

# B E A U F O R T

PORT ROYAL SEA ISLANDS

701 Craven Street Beaufort, SC 29902 843.525.8500

BeaufortSC.org



inner coastal